

ANSON DART.

[To accompany Bill S. 181.]

JANUARY 7, 1859.

Mr. COLFAX, from the Committee on Indian Affairs, made the following
REPORT.

The Committee on Indian Affairs, to whom was referred Senate Bill No. 181 "for the relief of Anson Dart," late superintendent of Indian affairs in Oregon, respectfully report :

That Mr. Dart was appointed such superintendent in the year 1850, and served in that capacity for the term of nearly three years ; that during the period of his service he had under his superintendence the Indian affairs of all the country now included within the Territories of Oregon and Washington ; that he was a faithful officer, and discharged his duties in a manner highly satisfactory to the government ; and that during the whole of his superintendency peace and quiet were maintained amongst all the Indian tribes under his care, and also between them and their white neighbors ; that at the time of his appointment the salary affixed to the office was twenty-five hundred dollars per annum ; but he was assured by the Indian Bureau and by the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate that a bill which was soon to be reported, establishing the office and the pay of superintendent of Indian affairs in California, should be made to include Oregon also ; that such provision had the sanction and approval of the Indian Bureau, but by accident or oversight the bill passed for California alone, fixing the salary of its superintendent at \$4,000, without changing that of Oregon.

The evidence before the committee shows that Mr. Dart would not have accepted of this office had it not been for positive assurances that he should receive the same compensation for his services in Oregon that should be given to the same grade of office in California ; and it is a matter of public notoriety that at that time the cost of living in Oregon was almost as great as it was in California.

It is also in evidence before the committee that Mr. Dart, while superintendent, negotiated no less than thirteen Indian treaties, saying to the government the usual expense of commissioners for their negotiation ; that he was the disbursing officer for six Indian agencies ;

that during his term not a cent of money was expended to quell Indian difficulties ; and that the expenses of the superintendency were not over one-fifth as much as in California at the same time, with about the same number of Indians.

Letters are also submitted from Hon. D. R. Atchison, then chairman of the Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, Hon. Thomas Corwin, then Secretary of the Treasury, and Hon. Luke Lee, then Commissioner of Indian Affairs, all corroborating the statement that Mr. Dart accepted the office with the express understanding that his salary should be made the same as that of the California superintendent. The present bill, however, makes it five hundred dollars per year less, which is satisfactory to the claimant.

Your committee would further report that, from an examination of the voluminous evidence accompanying the bill, they are satisfied that Dart has a just and equitable claim against the United States for moneys paid of out his own pocket and expenses incurred for the board of interpreters and hire of clerks employed by him as such superintendent, and are of opinion that the proper accounting officers of the Treasury Department should be authorized to settle with him upon principles of equity and justice, so as to indemnify him for the expenses thus incurred.

The committee therefore recommend the passage of the Senate bill for his relief without amendment.